THE WOMAN'S

DREADNOUGHT

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A PRISON TRAGEDY

Adolphus Ahlers, a naturalised Englishman, held the post of German Consul at Sunderland. In August, 1914, when War became imminent, people flocked back to their respective countries, and Ahlers, in conformity with the duties of his Consular office, assisted many persons to return to Germany. Then came the proclamation which forbade Germans to leave the country. Ahlers did not see it for three hours after its publication, and during those three hours he continued helping Germans to return to Germany, doing what before had been a duty, but now had become a crime.

For this he was charged with treason and sentenced to death, but he appealed against the sentence, and, in spite of the prevailing strong anti-German prejudice, he was acquitted on the evidence he was able to produce.

Mrs. Ahlers, always a delicate, nervous woman, was terribly shocked by her husband's trial and sentence and by the War and the ostracism and persecution to which the family was subjected. She suffered from sleeplessness, and began taking veronal. In the summer of 1915, when the Jingo Press was demanding the internment of all persons of German birth, Mr. Ahlers was interned at Islington, no reason for the step being given. Mrs. Ahlers became more and more worried and distressed, and in February, 1916, she almost died from an overdose of veronal, and was seriously ill for some time. Her mental balance was destroyed. She lost her self-control, and her children were obliged to hold her down in bed. They were anxious to get her into a nursing home, but were unable to persuade her to agree. On the fortnightly visit which they were allowed to pay to their father they told him of their mother's condition. Mr. Ahlers wrote four or five times to the Home Office, asking to be allowed to come out of the internment camp, in order to settle his wife in a nursing home, but he received no answer. Mr. Herbert Samuel, who was then Home Secretary, happened to visit the internment camp at that time, and Mr. Ahlers asked him why his letters were not answered, and urgently begged to be allowed to go out to attend to his wife. Mr. Samuel replied that he had not seen the letters, and knew nothing of the matter, but that he would see if anything could be done. The Ahlers' eldest son, a boy of 21, who is in the British Army, also wrote to the Home Office asking that his father might be released to attend to his mother.

On February 25th, 1916, whilst Mrs. Ahlers was still ill from the overdose of veronal, two detectives called at her house at Surbiton and removed her to the women's internment camp at Aylesbury. Again the authorities failed to give any reason for this step. Her children paid her the usual visits in the presence of a wardress, but neither she nor they were allowed to discuss the conditions inside. Whenever Mrs. Ahlers tried to refer to them the wardress intervened.

As husband and wife were now both interned, they could no longer see each other, and their letters were heavily censored, though obviously letters passing from one interned person to another could disclose no secrets to the outer world.

For some unexplained cause on October 25th, 1916, Mrs. Ahlers was removed to Holloway Prison, where she was placed in the remand hospital. Mr. Ahlers was notified of the fact that his wife had been removed from the internment camp to the prison, but was not told why. He was informed that she would be entitled to a visit once in three months' time on condition of good behaviour, but the visit could not be from her husband because he was interned.

Though it did not appear that she had been tried, Mr. Ahlers thought that his wife had been sent to prison as a punishment for some offence. He wrote to the Home Office, asking if this were the case, and whether he might see his wife, promising to ask her not to do anything insubordinate. As before, there was no answer to his letter.

Husband and wife were now interned within twenty minutes' walk of each other, but during nearly five months they pleaded in vain to be allowed to meet. Mrs. Ahlers especially begged continually to see her husband. In every letter to husband and children she emphasised her longing. She addressed many petitions to the Home Office.

On Thursday, March 15th, 1917, Mr. Ahlers was told that his wife was dangerously ill, that a medical consultation would be held at three p.m., and that he might go to her afterwards. At 3.15 he hurried to her cell only to find that she was unconscious. On Friday it was the same. On Saturday at ten he was told that she had died. The much-desired visit had come too late. The permission that had been withheld so long was only granted when the woman had no chance of recovery.

An inquest was held at the prison on Tuesday, March 21st, when it appeared that Mrs. Ahlers had died of veronal poisoning. Mr. Ahlers was refused permission to be legally represented at the trial until the previous day. She had left a letter telling her husband that she could not endure her unhappy life any longer, asking him to forgive her, and saying that she knew their daughter would keep the home going for the father and brothers. This letter was found under her pillow whilst she was unconscious.

Her daughter, a girl of about 22, gave evidence, saying that their mother's first question had always been for their father. She believed that if her mother and father could only have seen each other, her mother would have been content. This view was supported by the evidence of the prison wardress. The soldier son said that it distressed his mother that she and her family should have to register as alien enemies, though her husband was naturalised and her children born in England. Whenever he got leave, he went to see his mother, and by chance he was on leave that week-end. As soon as the regimental authorities heard of the inquest they had recalled him, but he had remained to attend the inquest.

Dr. Forward, the prison medical officer and deputy governor, explained that he had found Mrs. Ahlers unconscious. As she complained of pains in her head he thought that she might be suffering from a cerebral tumour or epilepsy. Some hours later he took a stomach washing, bottled and corked it, and sent it to the assistant analyst at the Home Office, who found half a grain of veronal in the first bottle and one-twentieth of a grain in the second bottle. Dr. Spilsbury, who had examined the body, reported signs of veronal poisoning.

Mr. Myers, the solicitor representing Mr. Ahlers, suggested that evidently Dr. Forward had been unaware that Mrs. Ahlers was in the habit of taking veronal or he would at once have used the means of combating the effects of the drug, which he did not employ until valuable hours had been lost. Dr. Forward's reply to this was somewhat vague, but as a matter of fact Mrs. Ahlers had told him that she was accustomed to taking veronal and the Aylesbury authorities ought surely to have told him that the patient was suffering from veronal poisoning when she was first admitted there.

Mr. Myers asked that the inquest might be adjourned, in order that evidence might be heard from Aylesbury. As there was no witness from that place, his client feared that his wife had been ill-treated at Aylesbury, and it would be a relief to his mind if he could be assured that this was not the case. The Home Office representative and the Coroner declared that this would be a useless waste of time, and the jury agreed. A verdict of "Suicide whilst of unsound mind" was returned.

The question as to how Mrs. Ahlers procured the veronal was not cleared up. She had not asked her daughter and elder son for it, and as they knew that once already she had nearly died through it, it is certain that they would not have

(Continued on page 712.)

The Dangers of a "Premature" Peace.

THE WOMAN'S DREADNOUGHT

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ADULT SUFFRAGE

Now that the marvellous Revolution in Russia fills the minds of all men and women, it is strange that the Mother of Parliaments should be occupying herself with measures so half-hearted and pettifogging as those suggested by the Speaker's Conference Report. The War has overwhelmed each one of us with its immense and terrible sorrows. Conscription has taken the manhood of every household. To young women it says: "I take your husband"; to old women, "I take your son." Life mourns for a generation of her youth broken and destroyed; the workers have taken upon their shoulders the burden of warfare, as well as the world's accustomed load of ill-managed, ill-requited toil.

But the men with the muck rakes at Westminster do not raise their eyes to look out on the prospect of suffering humanity around them. They have no heart to see the vision of human freedom of which the prophets tell. Their minds are engrossed with mean little prejudices and the wheels of their party machines. "You must not ask for political freedom," they tell the people, "You must forget that the right to vote is the right of all; you must hush your untrained voices. You know nothing of politics: you will upset our 'nicely balanced compromise.'" Members of Parliament say to the disfranchised masses—to all the women of the nation, to two-thirds of the men. "Unless we are agreed amongst ourselves nothing can be done for you." In order to stifle the demand of women for equality they have said to them: "You will destroy the general agreement if you ask for more." But there is no agreement and never has been, except an agreement not to ask for Adult Suffrage by those timid persons who pretend to be on the side of freedom without remotely understanding what free means. How false is the pretence of agreement by which it has been sought to silence those who desire the enfranchisement of the whole people, is shown by the fact that a host of amendments in opposition to the Speaker's Conference proposals has been tabled by the opponents of popular enfranchisement in any form. These amendments urge that there shall be no franchise legislation at this time; that women shall be excluded from any forthcoming legislation; that a new register shall be prepared and the franchise extended to all soldiers and sailors; general franchise reform being postponed until the absolute veto of the House of Lords has been restored. This last is a most impertinent attempt to prevent the enactment of the people's will. The reactionaries never fail to demand a heavy price for each extension of popular freedom, and they strive to secure that the priee they exact shall entirely nullify the democratic gain. How foolish, indeed, is the democracy which allows itself to be dominated by a small reactionary clique!

By a strange turn of the wheel of fate, Mr. Asquith, who, by his obstinacy for eight years postponed the long overdue Reform Bill because it was evident that women must be amongst the new electors, is chosen to move the resolution asking for franchise legislation. As we go to press we do not know how our old opponent will acquit himself, but we would remind him that he used to oppose limited suffrage Bills on the ground that they would not give votes to all women. Moreover, on June 28th, 1914, these were his words to a deputation of working women who went to him pleading that only womanhood suffrage would give votes to them:—

"On one point, I am glad to say, I am in complete agreement with you. I have always said, and I think I was reminded by Mrs. Scurr that I have said, that if you are going to give the franchise to women, you must give it to them upon the same terms that you do to men. That is, make it a democratic measure. It is no good tinkering with a thing of this kind. If the discrimination of sex is not sufficient to justify the giving of the vote to one sex and the withholding of it from another, it follows, a fortiori, it seems to me, that discrimination of sex does not justify, and cannot warrant giving the woman a restricted form of franchise while you give the men an unrestricted form. . . . If the change has to come, we must face it boldly and make it thorough-going and democratic in its basis."

We urge Mr. Asquith to act now in accordance with the sense of that statement.

The Prime Minister has made many declarations to the same effect. We ask that the vote shall be made as broad as the "National Service" about which so much is at present heard.

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

NEWS FROM RUSSIA

GOVERNMENT PAYS FOR STRIKE.

The Russian Government has decided to pay the wages of the workers who struck for a week, this being regarded as an act of national heroism, says Dr. Harold Williams in the "Daily Chronicle," who gives M. Kerensky, the Labour Minister of Justice, as his authority. We shall not find Henderson or Hodge making such a declaration till British workers adopt Russian methods!

THE GRANDMOTHER OF THE REVOLUTION.

It is inspiring to learn that the aged Madame Breschkovskaya, on her return from exile in Siberia, was met by a procession and housed in the Palace which belonged to the former Governor-General.

REFORMING THE ARMY.

In order to democratise the Russian Army, the soldiers are to be allowed to manage their own mess and recreation. Though such reforms are urgently required in the British Army also, we advise the Russian soldiers not to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage.

"SOCIALIST INTERFERENCE"?

"The Times'" Petrograd correspondent still complains of Socialist "interference" in Russia and of their "seditious" peace propaganda, and of the "endless concessions to the insatiable and unreasoning demands of theorists and ignoramuses" which the Provisional Government is forced to make. This is all to the good. We hope the Socialists will continue to be insatiable in demanding reforms.

REACTIONARY NEWSPAPER SUPPRESSED.

The Provisional Government has suppressed the "Novoe Vremya," a most reactionary Russian newspaper. "The Times" refers to the suppression as a cold-blooded violation of the principles of freedom." But that is because the "Novoe Vremya" represents the policy of "The Times." As a rule, "The Times" is the first to call for coercion.

PEACE BY NEGOTIATION CANDIDATE

Mr. Pethick Lawrence, who is so well-known for his ardent and self-sacrificing support of votes for women, is contesting South Aberdeen at the bye-election as a Peace by Negotiation candidate. He is opposed by Sir John Flemming, an orthodox Liberal, who is sitting on the fence in regard to the Liberal question of Free Trade. Mr. Lawrence's candidature is arousing much interest amongst the people of Aberdeen, and the local Press is devoting two or three columns every day to the campaign. Every day people are being won over to support the idea of Peace by Negotiation, and even amongst those who do not agree with this view respect for Mr. Lawrence's position is freely acknowledged. Polling is expected to be on Tuesday, April 3rd.

In addition to the main question of the War, Mr. Lawrence is urging that every man and every woman of full age should be entitled to the Parliamentary vote. He is also pleading the cause of disabled soldiers and sailors, and putting up a fight for Free Trade and against industrial and military conscription.

Mrs. Pethick Lawrence is working hard in the campaign, and Mr. Tom Richardson, Labour M.P. for Whitehaven, and other Members of Parliament are speaking on behalf of the candidature.

AMERICA AND WAR

There is little doubt that President Wilson is preparing for War, and once he has allowed himself to be drawn into the whirlpool he will find increasing difficulty in resisting the demands of Roosevelt and the other Jingoes, who wish to send an expeditionary force to Europe without delay, and to prepare a new army which at present they say should consist of two million men. War is like a devastating fire. We still hope that it may not spread to another great nation.

THE WAR AND THE STRIKE

The strikes on the Tyne and at Barrow show that, in spite of the Munitions Act, powerfully organised bodies of workmen can still "down tools." The Tyne strike was due to the dilatory methods of the Ministry of Munitions where the interests of the workers are concerned, for the workers had submitted their claim for increased wages on November 9th, and there was no attempt to consider it till they struck work in March. It was plainly evident that only drastic action would induce the Ministry to move, but whilst we sympathise with the demands of the workers, who claim a few shillings a week more in their wages to help them to meet the rising cost of living, we would urge the workers to adopt the wider outlook which has characterised the Russian people. Reports of strikes and riots in Germany are generally hailed with pleasure in this country, and hopes are expressed that the German people will emancipate themselves from their reactionary Government. We join in this hope, but we want the British workers to secure emancipation also in order that we may be ready to make peace with the German workers.

CAPITALIST CATSPAWS

Councillor Maine, who stands for Socialism on the Urban District Council, and is a conscientious objector, quoted against a grant of £50 to the Volunteer Training Corps. As a result, some of his workmates at Hebburn Colliery called a meeting and passed a resolution asking the firm to dismiss him. The firm has replied by giving Councillor Maine a fortnight's notice. This will mean that he will be taken as a conscript. In this cruel treatment of a fellow worker, the Hebburn miners are merely playing the part of catspaws for the jingo capitalists.

INDISPENSABLE AT 12s. A WEEK

Coming before the Edinburgh and District Munitions Tribunal on a complaint of having absented herself from her work, a girl of 19, employed in a controlled establishment, where she dealt with material for observation balloons, told the Tribunal that her wages were 12s. a week. She left because her work involved too great a strain on her eyes. She had asked for a shift to another department, but this had not been granted. She worked 52½ hours a week. A representative of the firm said the girl was so expert at her work that she was indispensable. The work was of great importance. If she got glasses the strain on her eyes would not be so great.

The Girl: The pay doesn't keep me, let alone get glasses.

To this the firm's representative replied that she had a war bonus of 2s. 9d. a week and that she would shortly get an increase of 1s. a week.

A Member of the Tribunal: A shilling is nothing.

The Firm's Representative: I quite agree that it is not a big wage, but it is arranged with the Ministry of Munitions.

The Chairman (Mr. Mackenzie Shaw, W.S.): It has been suggested that her wages are so low that she cannot afford glasses, and if you want to keep her you really ought to give her the glasses.

The firm's representative said he would be very pleased to bring the request before his employers.

The Chairman: It is the feeling of the Court that the wages are too low. You say she is indispensab.e, and you have had her for three years.

The firm's representative again mentioned that the girl would soon have an increase of 1s. a week.

The Chairman: We suggest 1s. of an increase is too little for a girl doing this work.

The result of the case was that the firm was asked by the Tribunal to provide the girl with glasses, and to make an effort, by arrangement with the Ministry of Munitions, to have the wages increased.

* * * *

At a Munitions Court at Walsall, on March 22nd, two girl bolt screwers asked for leaving certificates, and said their earnings had been from 9s. to 13s. a week. The firm's representative contended that they could earn better money if they chose. He declined to guarantee them a fixed wage of 13s., but said the employers in the district were negotiating with the Ministry of Munitions for an advance for this particular class of labour. The Chairman remarked that it was the lowest-paid labour in the district. The cases were adjourned for evidence as to the earnings of others employed on a similar class of work. A leaving certificate was granted to a woman nut screwer, who said she had been in her present situation for ten years, and had to work 57½ hours weekly to earn 11s. 10d. with bonus. Another woman bolt-screwer who also successfully made a similar application said she had worked for her employers for over 20 years, but could only earn from 10s. to 12s. a week.

THE TIPPING SYSTEM

ACTION BY A WAITRESS.

Mrs. Jeannie Birns appeared at the City of London Police Court on March 20th, having summoned Mr. Davies, the proprietor of "The Talbot" Restaurant, London Wall, for £2 in lieu of wages, a week's notice, "tips" and dinners. It appeared that on February 19th Mrs. Birns answered an advertisement for a half-time waitress at "The Talbot" Restaurant, London Wall, and was engaged to work as a half-time waitress from 9.30 to 3.30 each day for 5s. a week, "tips" and dinners. On the second day she was asked if it would be convenient for her to work until 9.30 p.m. She replied in the affirmative, and asked the terms of extra payment. The manageress replied that, as much money was to be made in that restaurant in "tips," she had never paid any extra wages for the extra hours of work. Mrs. Birns pointed out that the "tips" were paid by the customers, not by the proprietor, and said that as a Trade Unionist she could not agree to work without wages. She was then dismissed immediately. She was offered 5s., one week's wages, which she refused, and demanded a second 5s. in lieu of notice. This was refused, so she summoned the proprietor. Mr. Davies, the proprietor, called two waitresses as witnesses, who corroborated Mrs. Birns' statement as to hours and wages.

The magistrate asked Mrs. Birns if she had anything to say, and she explained that what the proprietor really wanted was a full-time waitress for half-time pay, and she deeply resented being dismissed at a moment's notice, as if she were a thief, for simply asserting an honourable principle. Mrs. Birns emphasised the evils of the "tipping" system, which undermines the self-respect of the girls. The girls whose wages are far below the subsistence level, and who, if dismissed at a moment's notice, cannot claim anything in lieu of the "tips" and meals, which, in fact, are part of her wages, is placed in a very helpless position. The magistrate agreed that the "tipping" system was a cursed and abominable system, and said that had he been in Mrs. Birns' position he would have acted in the same way and refused to work for nothing. He regretted that he could grant her nothing as compensation for the loss of "tips" and dinners, and ordered that she should be paid 5s. for one week's wages and 5s. in lieu of notice.

THE LABOUR CONFERENCE

MR. CLYNES PROTESTS.

Please allow me to dispel the impression conveyed in your report of the Conference that I sneered at Mr. Smillie in connection with his defeat as a Parliamentary candidate. On the contrary, I have had, and have often expressed, my admiration for his labours and my lament that the workers have not given him the support that he deserved. I repudiated the suggestion of a sneer at the Conference, as well as personally to Mr. Smillie. Your report is a travesty of what I thought and said, and it is a pity you should devote so much of a whole page to personal abuse of many who are doing their best for the enfranchisement of women. It is utterly false to state that I said that "Women do not want a broader franchise than that offered by the Speaker's Conference."—Yours faithfully,

J. R. CLYNES.

[We gladly accept Mr. Clynes' explanation that he repudiated any intention to sneer at Mr. Smillie's unsuccessful candidature, though our reporter awaited this explanation at the time and desired to hear it.

But with regard to Mr. Clynes' second protest, we maintain that the sense of his remarks certainly was that women did not desire a broader franchise than that offered by the Speaker's Conference, and, if he did not intend to suggest that, we ask why he took the trouble to read out the names of 28 women's organisations which had asked for legislation on the lines suggested by the Speaker's Conference? Mr. Clynes' remarks in this connection evoked protests from several women delegates.]

PREVENTING FREE SPEECH

MRS. BOUVIER PUNISHED FOR REPEATING THE WORDS OF PROTHERO AND BARNES.

On Sunday, March 25th, Mrs. Bouvier was arrested at the Workers' Suffrage Federation meeting in Hyde Park, where she was the principal speaker. It will be remembered that on February 25th Mrs. Walker was arrested at the W.S.F. meeting in the same place. These meetings are now held fortnightly, and as the speaker was unavoidably prevented from appearing on the last occasion, this was the first meeting since Mrs. Walker's arrest. We print below Mrs. Bouvier's own statement, explaining what took place, from which it appears that she was convicted for repeating the statements of Mr. Barnes, the Pensions Minister, and Mr. Prothero, the President of the Board of Agriculture. Mrs. Bouvier is appealing against the magistrate's decision. The case may be costly, but it is of immense importance in view of the great issue involved, which is whether anyone who does not support the War shall be allowed to address an orderly public meeting in Hyde Park. The magistrate's refusal to allow an adjournment to enable Mrs. Bouvier to obtain legal advice is, we believe, without precedent.

MRS. BOUVIER'S STATEMENT.

On Sunday, March 25th, about 3.30 p.m., I held a meeting, under the auspices of the Workers' Suffrage Federation, at the Marble Arch, Hyde Park.

A crowd of 250 to 300 people quickly gathered. In starting I proposed to divide my speech into two parts, i.e. (1) the Suffrage situation and the necessity for pressing the demand for Adult Suffrage, and (2) as a Russian-born woman on the meaning of the Russian Revolution. I was arrested during the first part of my proposed address and charged with insulting words and behaviour which, according to the evidence of the inspector of police, would have led to a hostile demonstration. I may state that members of that "dangerous" crowd (perfect strangers to me) spoke to me after I left Hyde Park Police Station in my own recognisance of £2 to appear at Marlborough Street Police Court on Monday at 10 a.m., and wanted to know why my interesting and instructive speech had been interrupted by the police. They were amazed to hear that I had been arrested in order to protect me from them and that I would deal with his question at question-time. I may state that the witness for the police is a well-known others like them. The only interruptions, or rather interjections, had come from a man who offered himself as witness for the police and a soldier whom I had assured heckler and disturber of Hyde Park meetings, and was particularly in evidence during the militant Suffrage agitation. Moreover, he was engaged in a lively altercation with a French lady in the audience during a considerable part of my speech, and for these two reasons I protested in the Police Court against him being used as a witness. I also protested against words and phrases being torn out of the context of a speech and used as incriminating evidence. The police inspector's chief points were:—

1. That I had stated that 100,000 men were discharged from the Army without pensions. He omitted to state that I had said "with gratuities instead of pensions."

2. That it was scandalous that women should be offered 18s. a week (with the present prices) for agricultural work under disgusting housing conditions. He omitted to state that "disgusting conditions" was not my statement, but a quotation from Mr. Prothero's speech in the Albert Hall, when he warned the women that the wages were low and housing conditions often such as would disgust not only women, but even men.

3. That I sneered at the people in this country rushing into uniforms while before the War the British used to sneer at display of uniforms on the Continent.

This again was torn out of the context of my remarks re the insult to women in the jocular speech of Lord Derby at the Albert Hall, tempting the women "with uniforms made to measure." Lord Derby's speech, I may state, was resented by many who heard him, and the "Daily Chronicle" and other papers commented adversely on it.

4. That I praised Germany.

This statement is entirely false, and I emphatically denied it, and called as witness Madame Block, a Frenchwoman, entirely pro-Allies, who denied this statement, and said that she would not have been in the witness-box if I had praised Germany.

This shows the danger of using parts of speeches as incriminating evidence. Germany was mentioned by me in connection with Mr. Prothero's remark re "disgusting conditions." I said: "While the Allies are accusing Germany of being uncivilised, it is hardly very civilised to have disgusting conditions for people who are asked to produce food."

In addition to Madame Block, I called as witnesses Miss Eagle and Miss Norris, who, in answer to my questions, testified that the crowd was interested and eager to hear more, and that the points which I raised were an illustration of the necessity to put the power of the Parliamentary vote into the hands of every man and woman of adult age, so that they might get in a constitutional way the freedom they had been deprived of during the War.

Another charge against me was the statement that the National Service was not voluntary, as the Order "that in a large number of trades employers are not allowed to engage men between the ages of 18 and 61" will compel many to enrol as National Volunteers in order to get employment. There is also the case of uninterned "enemies," who must choose between enrolment and internment. I naturally did not deny this statement, as it is perfectly correct.

I protested in Court, and protest again, against the refusal of my application for a week's adjournment in order to get legal advice, and also against the magistrate asking the inspector of police about former meetings addressed by me. I always understood that the magistrate had to deal with the specific charge in connection with the arrest, and not with what might have happened on former occasions.

I had to procure a surety in £20 to keep the peace for twelve months.

EUGENIA ANNA BOUVIER.

VOTES FOR WOMEN IN OTHER LANDS

VOTES FOR WOMEN IN RUSSIA

"It is settled that women shall vote for the Constituent Assembly. With such radical changes women's suffrage comes as a matter of course," says Mr. Harold Begbie in the report of an interview which he had with M. Miliukoff, the new Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, which was published in the "Daily Chronicle" on March 23rd. Nevertheless, "The Times" of March 26th reports that:

"Petrograd is witnessing the novel spectacle of processions of women agitating for the vote. Domestic servants are neglecting their duties in order to take part in the agitation."

If the vote were assured to women, such processions would be unnecessary. Let us hope they are intended to celebrate a victory.

MORE VOTES FOR WOMEN IN U.S.A.

The enfranchisement of women is rapidly spreading in the United States. This year North Dakota, Indiana and Ohio have just given Presidential Suffrage to women, and Arkansas has given votes to women for the primary elections. In the States the candidates to be put forward as representing each of the parties are decided in primary elections: it is as though we should have an election to decide whether Mr. Asquith, Mr. Lloyd George, or Mr. Trevelyan should represent the Liberal Party and whether Mr. Henderson, Mr. Macdonald, or John McLean should represent the Labour Party. The American "Woman's Journal" says of the Arkansas victory:

"The Arkansas House of Representatives on March 6th, by a vote of 54 to 27, finally passed the Riggs Suffrage Bill, which gives women the right to vote in primary elections. It had already passed the other House. Governor Brough signed the Bill on the evening of the same day at a suffrage mass-meeting, amid great rejoicings. This Bill gives women what is virtually full suffrage. Arkansas, like most of the Southern States, is so strongly Democratic, that any candidate who gets the Democratic nomination is elected as a matter of course. All the contest is in the primaries; there is no contest at the polls. Under this Bill, the women will have a right to vote in the primaries on the nominations for all officers, from the Governor down."

Arkansas is the first of the Southern States to grant votes for women. The victory is regarded as of very great importance because Southern opposition to the cause has hitherto been very strong on account of the anti-negro prejudice and fear of the negro women's vote.

The State of Maine, one of the Conservative New England States, in which the principle has long lagged behind the progressive West, also seems likely to record a suffrage victory at an early date, the House of Representatives having passed an equal suffrage amendment.

In Tennessee the House of Representatives voted in favour of women's suffrage, but the Senate, in which, as in all Southern legislatures there is a big anti-suffrage majority, voted against the Bill. President Wilson then telegraphed to the Senate as follows:—

"May I not express my earnest hope that the Senate of Tennessee will reconsider the vote by which it rejected the legislation extending the suffrage to women? Our party is so distinctly pledged to its passage that it seems to me the moral obligation is complete."

British political parties have not hitherto shown themselves desirous of carrying out moral obligations to support votes for women. In this matter it is desirable that they should follow the President's example.

* * * *

An electoral reform Bill, including a system of proportional representation, has been passed by the Dutch Lower House of Parliament, and is now before the Upper House.

* * * *

The Nova Scotia Legislature has unanimously passed the second reading of the Bill to enfranchise women and to allow them to practise law.

A MESSAGE FROM VANCOUVER

A message from the lately enfranchised members of the New Era League, Vancouver, B.C., to the women of the British Isles.

A resolution was passed on February 27th, 1917, at the monthly meeting of the New Era League protesting against the proposed new Franchise Bill of the British Parliament which puts the age of women voters at 30 or 35. This the members consider an insult to womanhood, and beg their sisters to stand fast to the principles of equal suffrage, equal pay for equal work, and equal rights regardless of sex. This message to be forwarded to the Suffrage Societies in Great Britain and Ireland by Miss M. A. Pelly, a visitor in Vancouver, and Hon. Member of the New Era League.

Interviews with leading members of the Ontario Legislature belonging to both parties indicate a practically unanimous sentiment in favour of woman suffrage in the provincial elections.

THE FOOD QUESTION

EAST LONDON FOOD MEETINGS

On Friday, March 23rd, an enthusiastic food meeting, convened by the Workers' Suffrage Federation, was held at Bow Baths. A deputation was elected to take the following resolution to Lord Devonport, the Prime Minister, Mr. Prothero, and the Mayor of Poplar:—

"This meeting views with concern the growing acute scarcity of food and the appallingly high prices, and demands that (1) private trading in food shall cease, and that the food supply shall be administered by the town and county councils, which shall use the existing shops as distributing agencies, paying the owners and employees of such shops a suitable salary on the lines of the system adopted by the Belgian Relief Commission; (2) that to ensure a sufficiency of food supply for every family, a rationing system be introduced, and that not merely the staple foods of poor people, but all kinds and qualities of food shall be included and distributed according to their caloric value; (3) that peace negotiations be entered into as speedily as possible, for as long as War continues the food scarcity is bound to increase; (4) that all the adult men and women of the country be enfranchised without delay."

Mr. Prothero wrote to say that the matter was not the affair of his Department; the Prime Minister wired that he could not see the deputation; Lord Devonport did not reply. Without waiting for an answer, the deputation of seven working women called at his office at Grosvenor House on Monday, March 26th. The flunkeys and officials tried to put them off with denials and excuses, but they refused to go, and one of the officials was so much impressed by what they had to say that he declared it would do Lord Devonport good to hear them. Mrs. Drake sent a note to Lord Devonport on behalf of the deputation, expressing the determination of the deputation to discuss the question with him. Eventually the women were taken to Lord Devonport's chief secretary, Mr. W. Paul. He asked whether the deputation knew what to ask Lord Devonport if he should appear at that moment. They produced the resolutions passed at Bow Baths. Mr. Paul glanced at them, and suggested that the last two did not concern the Department. Mrs. Drake replied that undoubtedly the food question had helped to produce a striking unanimity in the meeting on the two latter points, and that they were points which all the Government Departments must discuss. Mrs. Boyce said that Lord Devonport's Department had done no good up to the present, and that the Government could as easily take over the food as bodies of the men. Mrs. Carter complained that she had to pay 10d. per pint for butter beans; that working women are obliged by high prices to spend all their money on Saturday, and to borrow and send their children to school insufficiently fed all through the week.

Mr. Paul at last said that he thought Lord Devonport would receive the deputation, but that the women must wait. "Wait!" answered Mrs. Harris. "We can't wait—not two days!!!"

Mr. Paul promised to write not later than Wednesday, and the women told him that if he did not they would come again next Monday. Lord Devonport has since written agreeing to see the deputation on Monday next.

It was decided to hold another meeting in Bow Baths on Saturday next, but the hall has been refused. Therefore the meeting will be held at 400 Old Ford Road, Monday, April 2nd.

Meeting on FOOD

at THE WOMAN'S HALL, 400 Old Ford Road, E. Monday, April 2nd, 8 p.m.

***Speakers*: Mrs. Boyce, Mrs. Drake, Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, Mrs. Walker**

NATIONAL SERVICE

At a National Service meeting in Shoreditch women were much in evidence. Their questions were so much to the point, and the replies of the official speakers so vague and evasive, that the men in the audience joined in protesting that the scheme is merely the prelude to industrial conscription. The resolution could not be put, and the meeting ended in uproar.

At a similar meeting presided over by the Mayor of Poplar at the Great Palace Cinema on Sunday, March 25th, women again asked questions, and several of them were ejected by the stewards.

DON'T STAY AWAY FROM THE NATIONAL SERVICE MEETINGS. BE THERE TO TELL THOSE PRESENT WHAT YOU THINK!

NAVAL & MILITARY PENSIONS

A Central Conference on Naval and Military Pensions and Allowances was held in Essex Hall, Strand, on March 24th. Mr. George Lansbury presided. Messages of encouragement were received from Mr. W. C. Anderson, M.P., Mr. F. W. Jowett, M.P., Mr. J. R. Macdonald, M.P., and Mrs. Despard. Resolutions were moved by Mr. Robert Williams, Mr. A. A. Watts, Mr. J. H. Banks, Mrs. Drake, and Miss Sylvia Pankhurst. A representative committee of fifteen was elected to draft a national constitution, Mr. Lansbury, Mr. Banks and Miss Pankhurst to act as chairman, treasurer and secretary meanwhile. The following was amongst the resolutions adopted by the Conference:—

"That full pensions shall be paid to all soldiers and sailors discharged as medically unfit, whether from illness or wounds; and to the widows, children and dependants of all sailors and soldiers who die or are killed during their period of service, or whilst in receipt of disability pension. Pensions shall be granted in respect of men who may be discharged apparently fit, but afterwards are incapacitated, or die of disease contracted or commencing during service, or caused or aggravated by service. Unmarried wives and widows who were living apart from their husbands shall be paid on the married scale; also that the maximum limit of pension and separation allowance to parents and other dependants assessed on the pre-War basis shall be the same as that for widows and children, and in the case of persons mainly dependent on soldiers and sailors, adults shall receive the same flat rate of allowance and pension as wives, and brothers and sisters under 16 shall be treated as though they were the children of soldiers and sailors. Separation allowance shall be granted on the same scale in respect of dependence which arises after enlistment."

Eighty-nine organisations were represented at the Conference by 154 delegates.

A PRISON TRAGEDY (continued from front page)

given it to her, even had they been able. She had asked her younger son, aged 14, to get her veronal, but he had refused. It was suggested that she might have taken the drug down to Aylesbury, and have kept it from February 25th, 1916, till March, 1917; but that is most improbable, for, in the first place, as she had become addicted to taking the drug, it is most unlikely that she would have abstained from taking it for so long, and, in the second place, if she had had a store of the drug, she would not have asked her child to get it for her. Moreover, she was probably searched on going into Aylesbury, and though the prison officials suggested that she was not searched on reaching Holloway because she had come from Aylesbury, she told her daughter that she had been searched at Holloway.

If the authorities desire to retain their caged birds in safety further inquiry should be made as to whether the prison doctors supplied Mrs. Ahlers with veronal for sleeplessness, and, if so, whether she was actually seen to swallow each dose; also as to whether there is any possibility of drugs being supplied to prisoners by clandestine means.

But those who can still realise that War neither wipes out the fact of our common humanity, nor restricts it within certain frontiers, will chiefly desire to know why first Mr. Ahlers and then his wife were interned, and why the requests of the husband and wife to see each other were so callously ignored.

There is said to be a high rate of insanity amongst interned civilians, both in this country and in Germany and the other belligerent countries. Internment is in any case a very serious hardship. It is disgraceul that the authorities should aggravate the hardship by needless inhumanity.

THE RUSSIAN MEETINGS

Two wonderful meetings to celebrate the Russian Revolution were held in the East End on Saturday and Sunday, March 24th and 25th. We had the misfortune not to be able to be present at the former meeting, held in the Great Assembly Hall, Mile End Road, under the auspices of the Committee of Delegates of the Russian Groups in London, but Mr. Tchitcherine, the secretary, sends us the following account of it :—

It was an indescribable, unforgettable demonstration of enthusiasm, unbounded joy and revolutionary feeling. Over 7,000 persons were present, and many thousands were unable to get in and had to go away. During the whole meeting again and again outbursts of boundless enthusiasm filled the immense hall with unending applause and shouts. Telegrams with congratulations, expressions of joy, greetings to the revolutionary proletariat in Russia and best wishes for its future fight were received from the London Jewish Trades Council, the United Furnishing Trades Union, the East London Branch of the Amalgamated Society of Tailors and Tailoresses, the National Hat and Cap Makers' Union of Great Britain, the Workers' Circle, Mr. Morris Myer (editor of the "Jewish Times"), the London Jewish Cleaners' and Repairers' Union, the Jewish Socialist Labour Party Poaley Sion in London, and the Amalgamated Society of Tailors. The highest enthusiasm was reached when Russian sailors appeared on the platform fraternising with the Socialists, and one of them spoke of their solidarity with the Revolution; the same solidarity was also expressed by a soldier who had been a prisoner and had escaped, and spoke now of his wish to fight for popular freedom. A resolution was unanimously adopted rejoicing at the overthrow of the Tsarist despotism, calling on the democratic forces in Russia, headed by the class-conscious proletariat to fight with all their power against the Imperialist war and for international Labour solidarity, and trusting that great popular mass movements would follow the Revolution in Russia. The meeting also expressed its conviction that all those who have at heart the cause of the workers and of all the labouring masses in Russia must rally around the Council of Workers, and Soldiers' Delegates for the successful achievement of the work of the Revolution in the Republic of Russia, and demanded from the British Government the immediate release of Petroff, Mrs. Petroff, Sairo, Haese, and of the other Russian citizens who are deprived of their liberty.

The Sunday meeting, organised by the Foreign Jews' Protection Committee, was held at Camperdown House, Whitechapel. Here again, long before the hour for starting, the hall was crowded, masses of people were turned away, whilst those inside sang Russian revolutionary songs, which thrilled the heart with their majestic melancholy. The gangways were thronged, the light was dimmed by the close-packed crowds standing against the windows in the gallery. The audience was a swaying mass of humanity that easily broke forth into cheers and cries of enthusiasm for the coming freedom or groans of hatred and contempt for the tyranny that is overthrown. Lord Sheffield, who presided, was cheered when he welcomed the Russian Revolution or evinced his determination to stand by the right of asylum. But absolute silence greeted him when he approved of the War. The meeting had no special regard for his title. It applauded Lord Sheffield's words when it agreed with them; it applauded him for his courage in championing an unpopular cause, but it showed infinitely greater enthusiasm when it greeted others, and notably the two women speakers, the one because she was an East London comrade and had suffered imprisonment for freedom, and the other because as an Irishwoman she also belonged to a race which is oppressed. A resolution affirming the right of asylum and sending congratulations to the Russian comrades was carried unanimously.

PEACE DEMONSTRATION

VICTORIA PARK, LONDON, E.

SUNDAY, APRIL 15th, 1917.

Supported by East London Trades Councils, The Workers' Suffrage Federation, Branches of the I.L.P. and B.S.P. and other Organisations.

Speakers will include:

Mrs. C. DESPARD, ROSA HOBHOUSE, SYLVIA PANKHURST, THEODORA WILSON WILSON, REGINALD W. SORENSEN, HARRY DUBERY, E. C. FAIRCHILD, ALEXANDER GOSSIP, MRS. BOYCE, MRS. WALKER, MRS. DRAKE, Councillor B. GARDNER, and others.

Procession will form up at Beckton Road at 2.30, and proceed to Victoria Park *via* Dock Gates, 3.30 p.m. and the Obelisk, Bow, 4 p.m., reaching the Park at 4.30 p.m.

THE EAST LONDON PEACE CAMPAIGN

Friends are invited to help in the campaign which is to culminate in the Victoria Park meeting on April 15th. The campaign of canvassing and meetings will continue vigorously throughout the Easter holidays. Come and help; it is the best way to spend a holiday! Mrs. Bouvier, the meetings' secretary, and Mr. Edward Fuller, the canvassing secretary, urgently ask your help. Come to 400 Old Ford Road, the central office, and do your part.

MEMORIAL HALL

FARRINGDON STREET.

THE LIBRARY

TUESDAY APRIL 17th,

At 8 p.m. Doors open 7.30 p.m.

JUDGE NEIL, of Chicago

will lecture on

"MOTHERS' PENSIONS"

other speakers—

Mrs. Pethick Lawrence.

Dr. Barbara Tchaykovsky

Chair: Sylvia Pankhurst

TICKETS—2s. 6d. numbered and reserved; 1s. and 6d. reserved; Gallery 3d., can be obtained from the W.S.F., 400 Old Ford Rd., Bow; The I.L.P., St. Bride's House, Salisbury Square; The B.S.P. 21a Maiden Lane, W.C.; The International Suffrage Shop, 5 Duke Street, Strand, and at the door.

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The action taken by the Joint Board, and the "Statement" issued by the Labour Party, which are referred to in the following pages, deserve a reply. Here it is. It is addressed to the entire Labour, Trade Union and Socialist organisations of Great Britain. Study it well, and discuss it in your Societies, for the future well-being of the Working-Class Movement depends upon your verdict.

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RUSSIA FREE!

A GREAT

MASS MEETING

TO CONGRATULATE THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE ON THEIR CHARTER OF FREEDOM WHICH INCLUDES

ADULT SUFFRAGE

WILL BE HELD AT THE

ALBERT HALL

On SATURDAY, March 31, at 7 p.m.: Doors open at 6 p.m.

SPEAKERS WILL INCLUDE

A. BELLAMY (President, N.U.R.)
Commander WEDGWOOD, M.P.
ISRAEL ZANGWILL
GEORGE LANSBURY
W. C. ANDERSON, M.P.
ROBERT WILLIAMS
ROBERT SMILLIE
MAUDE ROYDEN Dr. LYNCH, M.P.
H. W. NEVINSON

FREE TICKETS TO BE OBTAINED FROM

The "Herald," 21 Tudor Street, E.C.4; W. A. T. Foot (N.U.R.), 119 Harvist Road, Kilburn, N.W.6; I.L.P. Office, Salisbury Square, E.C.4; 4 Duke Street, W.C.2; 220 Blackfriars Road, S.E.1; Foreign Jews Protection Committee, 42 Whitechapel Road, E.1; Dockers' Union, 425 Mile End Road, E.1; or—if you are lucky—at the Hall before the Meeting.

Pelican Press

PARLIAMENT AS WE SEE IT

March 20th.—Questions were asked concerning conscientious objectors: one is being forcibly fed, many are in gaol. In referring to German East Africa, where a technicality is said to prevent the British from freeing 15,000 slaves, Sir William Byles asked: "Is it possible that there should be slavery under the British flag?" What about Fiji?

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In reply to Mr. H. P. Harris, Sir G. Cave stated that two members of the Women Police Service and 58 members of the National Union of Women Workers are employed as constables in the Metropolitan area. The training is provided by the women's organisations, as the official classes are discontinued.

DARDANELLES CAMPAIGN.

Mr. Asquith defended Lord Kitchener, and protested that if the evidence on which the Report was based could not be published until after the War, the Report itself should have been held over till then.

Mr. Churchill, as usual, defended himself. He was anxious that the House should not "hamper responsibility in great matters by over-insistence upon the number of persons to be consulted," and said: "Why, sir, when the Fleet went to its War station on July 29th 1914, I submitted that proposal to the Prime Minister alone." This remark, though it discloses no new fact, is a little out of keeping with the story that the War fell upon a surprised, unprepared and unwilling Government on August 4th, 1914.

Sir Mark Sykes struck the truest note of the debate when he quoted this saying of Lord Kitchener, which shows that even a War Minister can at times feel for the poor human beings who are the pawns of the war game: "My head aches very badly to-night. I have not slept for three nights, because I have had a picture before my eyes the whole time of those poor men being drowned and massacred on the beaches at Gallipoli. What a relief it is to me to know that they are safely off."

We would apportion blame not to the men who have failed to win the War, but to those who failed to keep the Peace!

FOOD SUPPLIES (IRELAND).

Mr. Byrne complained that British speculators are tying up all the available food in Ireland, although the people there are suffering from lack of food. A certain firm had asked him in the smoke room of the House to take a commission from them to buy anything he could in the shape of foodstuffs in Ireland.

March 21st.—Mr. Hogge (L.) pointed out that officers who are wounded receive pensions before their discharge, but men do not, and that whilst petty officers who receive medals for conspicuous gallantry are awarded an annuity of £20, ordinary and leading seamen only get the medal.

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Dr. Macnamara (L.) tried to justify the minimum wage for dockers in Gibraltar being 13s. 6d. plus a war bonus of 15 per cent., whilst here it is 24s. plus 7s. war bonus. Sir Kinloch-Cooke (U.) said the cost of living in Gibraltar is as high as here.

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Mr. Long (U.) denied that there exists a law in Fiji forcing women to be prostitutes. Mr. Ginnell (N.) replied that several newspapers have stated it is in the Indian Immigration Ordnance.

WOMEN'S WAGES IN IRELAND.

Mr. Byrne (N.) stated that in the Army Ordnance Department in Dublin girls aged from sixteen to nineteen years are paid 5s. per week to do men's work, and women are paid 10s. to 16s. per week for work for which 6s. per day is paid in England. Mr. Crooks pointed out further that three men were given notice to make way for three ill-paid women.

* * * *

On the Army Estimates providing for 5,000,000 men, Mr. Hogge (L.) again complained that unfortunate men are transferred to Class W, Reserve, getting neither pay nor pension, and finding themselves unable to obtain civil employment. Mr. Macpherson replied that he must confess that the men in Class W and Class P. had got mixed. Class P was supposed to consist of men who were practically physically disabled, and entitled to some means of subsistence from the State," whilst in Class W were men who "might not have been physically unfit and might not have been physically disabled, but who were sent back from the Reserve into civil employment, the War Office having a sort of lien on their services—that is to say, if their civil employment came to an end or the country was in great need of men they could be called up." This sounds like industrial conscription. Men transferred to Class W. Reserve are to get a week's pay and separation allowance—not very generous!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE DUMA.

March 22nd.—Mr. Bonar Law (U.)) moved a resolution sending "fraternal greetings" to the Duma, and tendering "heartfelt congratulations" on the establishment of "free institutions" in Russia, which it was hoped would lead to "renewed steadfastness and vigour" in the prosecution of the War. Undoubtedly the resolution merely means that the British Government is praying that the Russians will not desert those who intend to carry on the War to the bitter end, but will help them to save their faces and their pockets. Mr. Bonar Law plainly showed that he was entirely devoid of enthusiasm for the Revolution, and that his sympathies were with the Czar. He said: "The greatest of all the issues of this War is to decide whether free institutions can survive the onslaught of military despotism" (we would point out that free institutions are surviving remarkably badly in this country) he added, "we cannot but rejoice in the hope that in the final stages of this world-conflict all the Allied Powers will be under the direction of governments which represent their peoples." We hope so, too, and are of opinion that it is a duty to set one's own house first in order!

Mr. Asquith (L.) said that it was the privilege of the Members of the Mother of Parliaments to be the first to welcome Russia into the fellowship of free peoples, and that "freedom is justified of her children" for "power and responsibility go hand in hand." Perhaps he forgot his eight years' struggle against the necessity of granting citizenship to his countrywomen.

Mr. Wardle (La.) said that at the Labour Electoral Reform Conference the first thought had been the Russian revolution with its message "universal suffrage," and that it had been "rather difficult to persuade our people to take anything less." But we ask: "Why, oh! why have we tried to persuade them?

Mr. Ponsonby (L.) suggested that the losses that a European War must inflict were incompatible with the great task before the new Government of Russia he hoped that it would be allowed to pursue its task without interference from outside.

Mr. Ginnell (N.) said "this Mother of Parliaments has been brought by war to destroy her own offspring—personal liberty." The leaders on the front benches were congratulating successful rebels though they had been persecuting unsuccessful rebels for ten months. The Parliament that proposed to congratulate the Duma had destroyed free institutions in this country it had always denied them to Ireland. "What do you know about free institutions," he asked, "except what a murderer knows of his victim?"

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND.

Sir Henry Dalziel (L.) moved that another attempt be made to settle the Irish question. Major Hills (U.) seconded the motion. Both pointed out the importance of sticking to the principles for which the war was being waged: the freedom of small nationalities. There was not only a Belgian scrap of paper, but also an Irish scrap of paper. Major Hills said it would not be pleasant to go to a Peace Conference "with Ireland standing in the corner as a naughty child."

Mr. R. McNeill (U.) seemed to indicate that Ulster is in no mood to give way, and Lord Hugh Cecil (C.) urged the further postponement of the question till after the War. Mr. Bonar Law (U.) said that the Government had decided to make another attempt to secure a settlement. He made the statement somewhat ruefully. His remarks appeared to suggest that the present intention of the Government is to offer Home Rule to Ireland, excluding the six Ulster counties.

Mr. Ginnell moved an amendment stating that as Ireland had been excessively taxed to the extent of £2,750,000 a year, which now amounted to £100,000,000: the debt should be repaid and Ireland left to manage her own affairs. He said that Ireland no longer looked to the Parliament at Westminster for help, but firstly to herself and secondly to the Peace Conference.

March 23rd.—In reply to Mr. W. Thorne (Lab.), Captain Bathurst (U.) announced that the selling price of tea will not be lowered until May 1st, in order to allow dealers to get rid of stocks for which they have paid a high price. Mr. Flavin (N.) protested that the speculators who had forced up prices, ought not to be given time to unload at the public expense.

COAL AND FOOD.

Mr. J. M. Henderson (L.) moved that the Government should issue Regulations under the Defence of the Realm Act that local authorities establish depots for the "sale and delivery of coal, sugar and other necessaries." He urged this especially for the sake of poor people. The only way to stop hoarding was to deal with the issue. The domiciliary visits from the police suggested by the Controller would be intolerable. He suggested that the police should be used to ascertain the number of people in each house and to deliver to each person a monthly card with detachable weekly coupons. These would be given to shopkeepers in exchange for the weekly supply of sugar or other commodity. The shopkeeper would have to show the coupons in accounting for his sugar, etc. Mr. Pringle (L.) seconded this proposal, which was supported by many other Members. Mr. G. Roberts (Lab.), Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, said that, though throughout his career he had been a supporter of municipal enterprise, he did not want to see local authorities given these wide powers and compelled to exercise them at a time like this, which he feared might not give them a fair chance. Moreover, he said local authorities had exhibited very little anxiety to exercise such powers. Nevertheless, it might be necessary to take such steps in regard to coal. Obviously he was disinclined to take a strong line of action one way or the other, and perhaps was unwilling to confess that he had no power and was merely put up to answer the questions prepared by officials and passed by his chiefs.

Captain Bathurst (U.), who represents the Food Controller, was not handicapped by any previous declarations of belief in municipal enterprise, and, as a confirmed supporter of Capitalism, he said emphatically that Mr. Henderson's scheme was not one which appealed in the smallest degree either to the Food Controller or the Ministry of Food.

The Amendment was negatived without a division. We have frequently observed that when anything of practical value is on foot the majority of the Members are away. We congratulate Mr. Henderson on having tried to press forward a concrete practical suggestion.

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March 26th.—Concerning paper restrictions, Mr. Chancellor asked: "Will fresh newspapers be allowed to come out?" Mr. Ginnell: "Yes, if they support the Government.

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Mr. O'Grady said that the Bramley (Leeds) Guardians deducted 8s. from the pension of Private Dickinson whilst he was in the Army, and left his wife and children 18s. a week to live on.

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The War Pensions Bill was considered in Committee.

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The Irish Party were again active. The constant harping on the Irish question may be wearisome, but trouble may break out in Ireland at any moment.

WHAT THE SOLDIERS SAY

MR. LEES SMITH, M.P., WHO WENT TO THE FRONT AS A PRIVATE SOLDIER.

This speech was delivered at a meetng held at the Central Hall, Westminster, on March 19th, 1917, in support of the following resolution:—

"This meeting welcomes the adhesion of the Allies to the American proposal to create a League of Nations for preventing the recurrence of war; declares its conviction that a settlement can only be decisive if it recognises the legitimate aspirations of every State; and urges the Government to use its influence towards obtaining such a settlement at the earliest opportunity."

When this Government went to War in August, 1914, I was among those who supported the action that it took. But since then I have learnt that you may go to war amidst the generous enthusiasm of the people, but if you allow diplomatists to have their way, the War will be continued on account of the secret ambitions of various offices and governors.

Once upon a time I was told that this is a democratic country, one in which a free people held their own destinies in their own hands. Is there anyone in this hall so innocent, or so deceived as now to believe that that is true? How much voice have any of you in those issues of war and peace which to you and me are issues of life and death? Whatever the theory of our situation may be, in practice you have no more voice over the issues of peace and war than do the subjects of the Czar, than the Arabs in Dakota, or the cattle that are browsing in the fields.

If you were to go through Europe and pick out from every country the men who in that country control the issues of peace and war, and if you were to put them all together, there would not be enough of them to fill the platform from which I am speaking now. If you were to pick out the men who control them in this country you could count them on the fingers of your hands.

Now, the question that we have to ask is: what have these men been doing in the last two and a half years? Those who try carefully and conscientiously to follow the course of events have observed with apprehension that from behind the original objects for which the people went to war there have emerged a series of new objects which were never originally in contemplation, which never have received and never would have received the national assent, which are the very negation of the generous enthusiasm with which the people went to war.

Constantinople for Russia, the dismemberment of the Austrian Empire into four, five or six different states, each too small and weak to protect itself, this war to be followed by another economic war, the reduction in perpetuity of all the German colonies without any equivalent elsewhere.

The question that we have to ask, the question upon which public opinion ought to insist upon an answer, is, what have all these things to do with the defence of the weak against the strong, with the maintenance of public law, with any single one of the objects for which the young men of this country have been sent out to die? We are told that we must not ask such questions as these; it is not patriotic; we are pro-Germans; the men who have died would not have liked it; leave it all to the small coterie of secret diplomatists. If we do that, if you leave it to the secret diplomatists, this War will continue for months, perhaps for years, after every good purpose has been achieved, and you will send to the slaughter for no good or necessary object tens of thousands of your countrymen. We have a right to know for what object this War is now being waged. Not only have we a right to know, but the men at the front have got the right to know as well.

It is not long since I myself returned from the front, I know something of what the men out there are saying and are thinking when they are by themselves. It is a very different thing from what the newspapers tell you that they are saying. I wish indeed that the issues of peace and war depended not so much upon the press of this and those who take their opinions from it, as upon the men who are seeing war as it is in its naked reality. What I say is this, that the men at the front if you send them to die are ready to die, but surely before they die they have the right to know what they are dying for, in order that if they die they may die like men and not like cattle.

Many references have been made in this meeting to the proposal of a League of Nations. I am not going to enter into it in detail, but about that proposal I wish to make just one remark. I have found that there are a number of people in this country who are feeling very uncomfortable, who feel that somewhere something is very wrong, but who do not like to face the facts of the situation. I find the danger is that people in this frame of mind swallow the idea of a League of Nations just as though it were butter; they take it like a dose of soothing syrup; what a beautiful idea—"after the War is over." It is no use saying that you believe in a League of Nations unless you also make up your mind that if you accept that proposal it determines your whole view of what the terms should be, and therefore of how long it is necessary to continue this War. There are two views about the terms of peace. One view is that this country and its allies are to gratify various imperial ambitions, Constantinople for one, Dalmatia for another, the German colonies for a third, and so on. That is for the moment the popular view, but before any of you allow that view to obtain entrance to your minds, realise the fact that if you once permit the Government of this country to adopt it, then you abandon all hope of a League of Nations, and you commit the children of mankind to suffering once again all that bloodshed and grief and mutilation, broken hearts and ruined homes from which, if we only learn a lesson, the world can now pass for ever away. If you wish to obtain a League of Nations you must adopt an entirely different way of looking at the whole subject. If you want to obtain terms of settlement upon which you can erect a League of Nations, there is only one kind of settlement which can ever do that: that is a settlement in which you put behind you all proposals for imperial aggrandisement: a settlement in which you recognise that the Germans must be given the same legitimate rights as we can claim ourselves. A settlement which will not only substitute peace for war, but a settlement which will substitute the possibilities of friendship for the continuance of hate. A settlement which sweeps away grievances and does not create them. The supreme question of this moment is, when is it possible to obtain such terms as these? My opinion is that if the Government were to make it clear that it has put behind it all these imperialistic proposals, that it seeks only the fulfilment of these obligations of honour for which the people entered the War, then I believe that I am right; but the point is this, that it I believe that the end would come within sight and that peace would even now be well within your grasp. It is the duty of the Government to make it clear. It is their duty to utilise it not as the last throw in a militaristic gamble, but as the lever to obtain our original honest, decent demands. I cannot speak, of course no one could speak upon such a subject as this with absolute certainty; I may be wrong; I believe that I am right; but the point is this, that it is very easy for the Government to find out, and what I contend is that for the Government of this country to go on with this offensive, deliberately to make up its mind to send to the slaughter tens of hundreds of thousands of English boys, without even trying to find out, is a crime against which we ask everyone in this hall to register a protest now. (Loud and prolonged applause.)

PEACE MEETING

Victoria Park, To-Morrow

SUNDAY, 3 p.m.

Speaker: Rev. G. T. SADLER M.A., LL.B.

Chair: Miss Lynch

THE
WORKERS' SUFFRAGE FEDERATION

To secure Human Suffrage, namely, a Vote for every Woman and Man of full age, and to win Social and Economic Freedom for the People.

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WHAT'S ON?

W.S.F. FIXTURES

OUTDOOR

FRIDAY, MARCH 30th.
Piggott Street, Poplar 12 (noon), Mrs. Boyce.
SATURDAY, MARCH 31st.
Grundy Street, Poplar, 11.30 a.m., Miss Price.
Hoxton Street, 3 p.m., Mrs. Boyce.
SUNDAY, APRIL 1st.
Hoxton Church, 11.30 a.m., Mrs. Walker, Miss Beamish.
Osborn Street, Whitechapel, 11.30 a.m., Miss Price.
"Salmon and Ball," 11.30 a.m., Mrs. Boyce.
Hoe Street, St. Mary's' Road, Walthamstow, 11.30 a.m., Mr. Gibson.
Victoria Park, 3 p.m., Peace Meeting.
Cannon Street Road, 3 p.m., Mrs. Walker.
MONDAY, APRIL 2nd.
"Whitehouse," Canning Town, 3 p.m., Miss Price.
TUESDAY, APRIL 3rd.
"Abbey Arms," Canning Town, 12 (noon), Miss Price.
THURSDAY, APRIL 5th.
Rathbone Street, Canning Town, 11.30 a.m., Mrs. Boyce.
FRIDAY, APRIL 6th.
White Cross Street, 1 p.m., Mrs. Boyce, Miss Beamish.
"Peacock," Canning Town, 6 p.m., Mrs. Boyce.
SATURDAY, APRIL 7th.
"Whitehouse," Canning Town, 11.30 a.m., Miss Price.
Beckton Road, Canning Town, 6 p.m., Mrs. Boyce.

INDOOR

CHANDOS HALL "AT HOME," 21a Maiden Lane (off Bedford Street, Strand).—To-day, 3.30 p.m., Madame Lafitte Cyon, "Mothers' Guilds." Chair, Miss Lynch. This is the last "At Home" until April 14th, when Mr. Arthur Lewis, of the English Zionist Federation, will speak on the Zionist Movement.

BOW WOMEN'S HALL, 400 Old Ford Road, Bow.—To-morrow (Sunday), 6 p.m., Miss M. A. E. Milton, "Adelheid Popp" (an Austrian working woman Socialist); Mr. John Scurr. Chair, Miss Sylvia Pankhurst.

POPLAR WOMEN'S HALL, 20 Railway Street., Poplar (opposite South Bromley Station, N.L.R.).—March 30th, 3 p.m., Meeting. Speaker, Miss Lynch. April 4th, 8.15 p.m., Mrs. Boyce.
Admission free. All are welcome!

BROMLEY, 53, St. Leonard's' Street.—April 4th, 8.15 p.m., Mrs. Boyce will speak.
March 30th, 8 p.m., "Casey and His Fiddle," Bow Baths, Roman Road, E.
B.S.P. Hall, 44 Malden Road, Kentish Town, March 31st., 7 p.m., "At Home."
Memorial Hall, April 17th, Judge Neil on "Mothers' Pensions"; Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, Dr. Barbara Tchaykovsky, and Miss Sylvia Pankhurst.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

At Kingsley Hall, Bow, on Sunday next, April 1st, at 8.15 p.m., Brother Ernest will give a Recital with his fiddle.

"Casey and his Fiddle," Brotherhood Church, Southgate Road, N. Sunday, April 1st, at 3.30.

All Societies are cordially invited to send in notices of forthcoming events for our "What's On" column. Fee, 1s. 6d. for twenty words and ½d. per word after.

JUDGE NEIL IN ENGLAND

The W.S.F. has arranged the following meetings to be addressed by Judge Neil on the Mothers' Pension Schemes:—

April 17th, Memorial Hall, 8 p.m., Judge Neil, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, Dr. B. Tchaykovsky.

May 6th, Lees Hall, Canning Town, 7 p.m., Judge Neil, Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, Mrs. Drake.

April 18th, Portsmouth, joint with Trades Council and I.L.P.; April 21st Stirchley, Birmingham, joint with I.L.P.; April 22nd, Leicester; April 23rd, Huddersfield; April 24th, York; April 25th, Leeds; April 29th, Merthyr and Aberdare, joint with I.L.P. Other provisional meetings under consideration.

TO READERS AND SYMPATHISERS

In view of the shortage of paper and the various difficulties which war measures put in our way we ask our friends to make sure of the WOMAN'S DREADNOUGHT by using one of these coupons. If you desire popular liberty to have a staunch defender, hasten to give the DREADNOUGHT all the support you can.

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W.S.F. BRANCHES

ARE YOU AN ACTIVE WORKING MEMBER?

LONDON

BARKING.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Langford, Ailsa Craig, 97 Essex Road.

BOW.—400 Old Ford Road, E. Hon. Secretary: Miss Stevens. Branch meetings are held every second and fourth Monday. DREADNOUGHT sales week ending March 24th, 1,409; Miss Harriet, 503; Miss Beamish, 476; Miss O'Brien, 120; Miss Smyth. 82; Mrs. M. Holloway, 79; Mrs. Hasler, 50; Mrs. Greer, 13; general, 61.

BROMLEY.—53 St. Leonard's Street. Hon. Secs.: Mrs. Lansbury, Mrs. Wood.

CANNING TOWN.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Parsons, 94 Ravenscroft Road.

CENTRAL LONDON.—Hon. Sec.: Miss Casey, 29b Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 52.

ENFIELD AND EDMONTON.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Beavis, 171 Church Street, Lower Edmonton.

LEYTON.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Hart, 73 Calderon Road. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 26.

POPLAR.—Hon. Sec.: Miss E. Lagsding, 20 Railway Street. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 105; per Mrs. Shlette, 70; general, 35.

TIDAL BASIN.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Drake, 49 Crediton Road. DREADNOUGHT sales average 36.

ST. PANCRAS.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Redgrove, B.S.P. Hall, 44 Malden Road, Kentish Town. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 13.

WILLESDEN.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Sheppard, 141 Villiers Road. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 12.

PROVINCES

BRADFORD.—Hon. Sec.: Miss McHale, 12 Airedale College Terrace. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 26.

BRIGHOUSE.—Hon. Sec.: Miss Woodhead, Wood View, Shelf, near Halifax.

BRYNMAWR AND NANTYGLO.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Hayward, Coedcae, Garn Fack.

BURNLEY.—Hon. Sec. pro tem.; Mrs. Mortimer Holden, The Nurseries, Accrington.

CHESTER-LE-STREET.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Harrison, 14 Hilda Terrace, South Pelaw, Chester-le-Street.

CHOPWELL.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Bell, 62 Forth Street. Fortnightly meetings are to be held to discuss such books as "Woman and Economics," "Woman and Labour," etc. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 12.

CORNSAY AND QUERBEC.—Hon. Sec. pro tem.: Miss Ellis, Dundalk House, Neville's Cross. Branch meeting, Monday, at 197 High Street, Cornsay. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 30.

DONCASTER.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Kent, 32 St. Sepulchre Gate.

FERRYHILL.—Hon. Sec.: Miss Ruby Stoddart, 12 Hackworth Street, Dean Bank. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 12.

HUDDERSFIELD.—Hon. Sec.: Miss Joan Edgehill, B.Sc., 123 Cowcliffe Hill.

LEEDS.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Hunter, 7 Sugdenfold, Armley. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 72.

LEICESTER.—Hon. Sec.: Miss Helen Bakewell, 28 Macdonald Street, Bellgrave. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 13. Branch meeting, April 2nd.

MANCHESTER.—Hon. Sec.: Miss F. Wassilevski, 18 Broughton Street, N. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 26.

MEDOMSLEY.—Hon. Sec.: Tom Orr, Esq., 6 Derwent Cottages, Durham. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 24.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—Hon. Sec.: Mr. Nicholson, 19 Alexandra Road, North Heaton.

PRUDHOE-ON-TYNE.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Parks, 4 Riding Terrace, Mickley Square. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 8.

PORTSMOUTH.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Clarges, 200 Westfield Road, E. Southsea. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 39.

ROTHERHAM, WAKEFIELD.—Organiser: Miss Stephen, 33 Hopwood Street, Hull.

SHEFFIELD.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Manoin, 98 Gell Street. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 104.

SOUTHAMPTON.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Samuel 33, Mount Street. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 12.

YORK.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Hall, 43 Lowther Street.

SCOTLAND

GLASGOW.—Hon. Sec.: Lachlan Smith, Esq., 126 Bothwell Street.

HOXTON BRANCH

HOXTON.—A very successful meeting was held at St. Stephen's Shop on March 26th, at which Miss Pankhurst and Mrs. Drake were the speakers and Miss Lynch was in the chair. Most of the audience had come to one of our meetings for the first time, and all asked for another meeting to be held shortly. It was unanimously agreed to hold a meeting on Thursday, April 19th, at 8 p.m., and friends are asked to keep this date free. Speakers will be announced later. Mrs. Sneddon and Mrs. Eglinton are thanked for kindly getting the refreshments, and also those who helped by taking collection, handing round refreshments, &c. Collection: 3s. 5d.; Donations: Mrs. Geneen, 1s. 6d.; Anon (at Mile End on Saturday), 6d.

Friends and members please note that this shop is now open, and has on sale Labour, Suffrage and all kinds of reform literature. If you deal with us, you will help the funds.

* * * *

BIRMINGHAM.—On Saturday afternoon, March 17th, Miss Sylvia Pankhurst spoke in the Priory Rooms. Miss Margaret Haly, who has this winter given members so many inspiring lectures on international questions, was in the chair. The meeting was most successful and encouraging, and a number of new members were made. On Saturday evening Miss Pankhurst spoke for the Bromsgrove Co-operative Education Committee. On Sunday evening the Labour Church at Stirchley Institute was crowded with earnest and enthusiastic listeners to Miss Pankhurst's speech. Again new members were made.—A. F. BODEN.

LEYTON BRANCH "AT HOME."

Members and friends of the Leyton Branch of the W.S.F. will be "at home" to Sylvia Pankhurst, at the Wanstead Slip Liberal Club, on Friday evening, April 13th, when there will be short speeches, a musical programme, and light refreshments at popular prices. Mrs. Norah E. Walshe will take the chair. Admission free by invitation, to be obtained from Mrs. C. Hart, Hon. Sec., 73 Calderon Road, Leytonstone, E.11; Mrs. Norah E. Walshe, 22 Dyson Road, Leytonstone, E.11; Edward Fuller, 47 Spratt Hall Road, Wanstead, E.11; and from 400 Old Ford Road, E.3.

A public meeting will be held on Friday, March 30th, at the Clarion Café, Market Street. Mrs. Forrester, M.A., is the speaker for the evening. The meeting will open at 7.30 p.m. Also a Jumble Sale will be held on April 14th, and members and friends are kindly requested to send parcels to Miss Graham, 251 Upper Brooke Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock. All things will be gratefully accepted.

Donations to be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Dr. Tchaykovsky, or to the Hon. Financial Secretary, Miss N. L. Smyth, 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E.
All parcels to 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E.

GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED

GENERAL FUND.—Anon, £80; Irene, per Mrs. Drake (weekly), £1. COLLECTIONS: Bow Baths, £1 0s. 5½d.; Mrs. Boyce, 10s. 8½d.; Chandos Hall, 8s. 8d.; Profit on Tea, 1s. 10d.; Mrs. Walker, 6s. 9d.; Miss Price, 5s. 5d.; Bow Women's Hall, 2s. 10½d.; per Miss Vine, 1s. 6d.

"DREADNOUGHT" FUND.—Anon, £20; per Mrs. Drake, £10; Brinley Dupree, Esq., 5s. 10d.; Mrs. McCracken, 5s.; Mrs. Thomas (monthly), 1s.

MILK AND GENERAL DISTRESS.—J. Leakey, Esq., £2; Mrs. Nastrowsky, £1 1s.; Mrs. R. B. Preston, £1 1s.; Nurse Hebbes (weekly), 12s.; Mrs. Hyde, 10s.; Donations, Birmingham, per Miss Pankhurst, 6s. 10d.; Master Chamberlain, 5s.; Miss Percival, 5s.; Miss M. Player, 3s. 6d.; Miss L. Clarke, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Thomas (monthly), 1s. COLLECTIONS: The Army Clothing Stores, Pimlico (Miss Fox, per Mrs. Bertram), £1 18s. 6d.; L.S.A. Tool Room, £1 12s. 6½d.; Mrs. Edwards, 13s. 7d.; Miss Mackay (Churn), 11s. 2d.; Miss E. Lagsding and L. Barker (Green's Yard), 10s. 6d.; Sale of Clothes, per Nurse Hebbes, 7s. 1d.; Misses K. Lagsding and T. Barker (Cubitt Town), 5s. 4d.; Restaurant Box, 4s. 3½d.; Miss M. Marsh, 2s. 6d.; Miss Muriel Newton, per Mrs. Ellis, 2s. 5d.

CLOTHES &c.—Mrs. White, Miss McClenan, Mrs. Oak.
BOTTLES.—Mrs. Pexton.
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Day nursery from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Doctor's consultation and baby-weighing, Mondays, 2.30 p.m. Mothers and babies can consult Nurse at any time.

Health Talks for Mothers are held the first and third Fridays in the month at 3 p.m., at the Mothers' Arms.
Dental Clinic, April 4th, 2.15 p.m.

20 Railway Street, Poplar.
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Doctor's consultation and baby-weighing, Tuesdays, 2.30 p.m. Nurse may be seen at any time.

53 St. Leonard's Street, Bromley-by-Bow.

Doctor's consultation and baby-weighing, Wednesdays, 2 p.m.
All mothers and children are welcome.

Cost Price Restaurants at 400 Old Ford Road, and 20 Railway Street. Dinners from 12 till 2 p.m. daily.

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Broken men, discharged with insufficient pension, constantly ask our help for their wives and children. The rising price of food is causing grave distress amongst poor families. Help us to provide the milk, nourishment and necessary clothing, without which doctoring is of small avail. Send a subscription to the Treasurer of our Distress Fund, Dr. BARBARA TCHAYKOVSKY, 400 Old Ford Road, E., or a parcel to Miss NORAH SMYTH at the same address.

MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS

FAMILY LIMITATION DOCTRINE. Post free, 1½d. —Malthusian League, Queen Anne's Chambers, Westminster.

HAND-MADE UNDERCLOTHING. Soldier's wife, good needlewoman, desires work to do at home; good references. Women's nightdresses made from 2s. 6d.; babies' gowns from 1s. Mending and darning also undertaken.—Apply Box 20.

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BOW BATHS HALL

FRIDAY, MARCH 30, 8 p.m. (doors open 7.30)

CASEY AND HIS FIDDLE

Speeches—

Miss SYLVIA PANKHURST; Mr. JOHN SCURR

The Draw for the W.S.F. Competition will take place.

Reserved Seats 7d. (including War Tax)
Unreserved Seats 4d. (including War Tax)

CHANDOS HALL "AT HOME" TO-DAY, SATURDAY, at 3.30 p.m.

Madame Lafitte Cyon:—
"Mothers Guild"
Chair: Miss Lynch

SUNDAY MEETING to-morrow at 6 p.m. at 400 Old Ford Road Bow, E.

Miss Milton. "Adelheid Popp"
Mr. John Scurr
Chair: Miss Sylvia Pankhurst

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